

Psalm 23

Psa 23:1 A Psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want (*Heb.2637- lack; by implication to fail*).

- This poem which was written by David is a praise to God for the blessings he received from above even though he knew he wasn't worthy of such favor. No matter what, David understood that as long as he was "a man after His (God's) own heart...the Lord hath commended him to be captain over His people" (*1 Sam 13:14*). Why then should he fear anything? Notice Paul's words to the Romans.

Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. **38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, **39** Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- I shall not want (*lack/fail*)- People are, for the most part, terrified of failure. We never want to mess up or be put in a position where it's possible to show our weaknesses. But, as long as we are faithful to Christ our Lord, and "walk honestly toward them that are without" we will "have lack of nothing" (*1 Thes 4:12*). Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. It was through Christ that God showed His love for mankind.

Mar 6:34 And Jesus, when He came out, saw much people, and was **moved with compassion** toward them, because they were **as sheep not having a shepherd**: and He began to teach them many things.

Webster © 1983: Sheep- 2. one who is meek, timid, submissive, etc.

Mat 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

- Isn't it interesting that Jesus saw what they, and we for that matter, really needed. They needed to be fed with His words. Misguided people are as sheep not having a shepherd to point them in the right direction. As He had compassion toward them we also need to sympathize with the lost of today by helping them "return to the Shepherd and Bishop" of their souls (*1 Pet 2:25*).

1Pe 2:25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. *Because...after listing some sins that members at Corinth were once involved in, Paul wrote...*

... such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God. (*1Co 6:11*)

- If Christ was able to cleanse us from our sin-filled pasts, why would He then abandon us to fend for ourselves when it comes to our spiritual protection and other necessities of life?

Psa 34:9 O fear the LORD, ye His saints: for *there is no want* (*Heb.4270- deficiency; hence impoverishment*) to them that fear (*Heb.3373- morally reverent*) Him.

- God's people should never go without as long as there are those among us that have the necessities of life. And even when there aren't, God will always take care of His faithful.

Luk 18:29 And He said unto them, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, 30 Who shall not receive manifold more **in this present time**, and in the world to come life everlasting.

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Psa 23:2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth (Heb.5095- sustain) me beside the still waters.

- Sheep lie down when having been sufficiently fed. Here, for sheep to lie down in the midst of an abundance of sustaining food gives the idea that even when our necessities are fully satisfied, there is always present the abundance of more. We might not see it, but God knows our needs better than we do.

Psa 37:16 A little that a righteous man hath *is* better than the riches of many wicked.

- Still –(Heb.4496- repose [*calm*] or [adverbially] peacefully [*peacefulness*]) waters. To be sustained by such peaceful blessedness, because remember, to the psalmist, water was a rare commodity, is the gift of a loving Shepherd to His submissive sheep.

Isa 57:20 But the wicked *are* like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. 21 *There is* no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

- Not that God doesn't care for the lost either. It's just that they are outside the protection and care of the Shepherd, wondering aimlessly in ignorance. And ignorance isn't bliss.

Mat 5:43 **Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. 44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; 45 That ye may be the children of your Father Who is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**

- You can always tell who the **true** children of God are, by the way they treat others. How often have we been in situations where we just want to lash out at someone for cutting us off in traffic or when some telemarketer calls at the dinner hour and you've just sat down to enjoy a nice meal at the end of a hard day's work? How did it make you feel when you reacted, if you did, in an un-Christ-like manner? How would you have felt if you had just kept quiet, calmed down and kept your feathers from getting all ruffled up and maybe even said something nice to them. Remember, salespeople are trying to make a living too. You never know when one might feel guilty for causing you such an inconvenience and will make a point to call at a more convenient time. I try to give them every opportunity to take no for an answer before I politely bid them a good day and hang up as they continue their pre-rehearsed rant.

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Psa 23:3 He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

- When after being mocked and degraded by an unjust world around us, after facing the iniquity that encompasses us, after having our hearts and minds exhausted to the point of despair, we need to be rejuvenated. Such rejuvenation our **Shepherd** gladly provides.

Isa 40:11 He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry *them* in His bosom, *and* shall gently lead those that are with young.

- He leadeth me in paths of righteousness- God keeps us on track as long as we “walk in the light” (1 Jn 1:7). Without which we stumble in darkness.

Psa 25:9 The meek will He guide in judgment: and the meek will He teach His way.

- Which is why we also have to do our part because God won't save us if we wonder off the paths of righteousness.

Jer 6:16 Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye **in the ways**, and see, and ask for the **old paths**, where *is* the good way, and **walk therein**, and ye shall find rest for your souls. ...

Mat 7:14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

- For His name's sake- shows purpose for us to be lead in the paths of righteousness. As a father tries to instill his authority in his children in a way that will bring honor and not shame on the family name, so it is with God. He guides His faithful children in such a way for the world to recognize His authority and character. As we display His spiritual attributes through our behavior along with charity and righteous living, He receives honor because of it. We in turn “find grace to help in time of need” (Heb 4:16).

Psa 89:16 In Thy name (Heb.8034- *authority*) shall they rejoice all the day: and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted. 17 For Thou *art* the glory of their strength: and in Thy favour our horn (Heb.7161- *figuratively power*) shall be exalted.

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Psa 23:4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou *art* with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

- Yea, though- **Even if**, as it was with David, we have to go through some pretty tough times and even when we are tempted beyond measure, the path of righteousness that takes us through the low points of life will get us to the other side of that dark valley. But only as we have our **Shepherd** by our side to guide us through.

Joh 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

- What better **Guide** to get us through the shadows than the **One Who** has been there and knows the way, **Who** conquered the enemy to allow us safe passage and **Who** also holds out the light of His word so we can see to get safely to the other side?

Psa 119:105 Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Joh 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is **passed from death unto life.**

- Life's pathway on earth is akin to the valley of the shadow of death. But the faithful Christian need not fret because death to us is really the moment we truly begin to live.

Isa 9:2 The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.

- This was a prophesy of Christ's coming to bring light into the world through the gospel.

Mat 4:13 And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim: 14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, 15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; 16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.

- Death is a shadow that hangs over us all. But not for those of us who have died to sin.

Rom 6:9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him. 10 For in that He died, He died unto sin once: but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

- How is it then possible to walk in darkness when Christ is the light?

Joh 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, **I am the light of the world: he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**

- As a shepherd young David carried a staff and a rod. He understood how a shepherd used them and equated that to how God is able to rescue His sheep from the enemy. The staff was used, among other things, to pull his sheep from the mouth of a hungry beast. The rod was used to beat the animal back while saving his sheep.

1Sa 17:34 And David said unto Saul (*when giving his qualifications to fight Goliath*), Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: 35 And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered *it* out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught *him* by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. 36 Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

- What a comfort to know our Shepherd defends us likewise!

2Co 1:3 Blessed *be* God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and **the God of all comfort**; 4 Who **comforteth** us in all our tribulation, **that we**

may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are **comforted** of God.

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Psa 23:5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

- In the presence of mine enemies- Because of David's sin with the wife of Uriah he was told he would never rest from war.

2Sa 12:10 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised Me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

- But because of his repentant heart God continually blessed him, even in the presence of his enemies.

- Thou anointest my head with oil- David understood this verse personally. Earlier in life he received the anointing to become king over God's people Israel which was a sign to those present of the authority bestowed on him from the Lord.

1Sa 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

- But there was another anointing that David would experience after being punished with the loss of his newborn son. Bathsheba had conceived with David while she was still married to Uriah. In **2 Sam 12:14** David was told that "the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die". After lying on the ground all night, fasting in the hopes that God would spare his child that was conceived in an adulterous relationship with another man's wife, he realized God's will was not according to his own wishes, and the child died.

2Sa 12:20 Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and **anointed himself**, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he **did eat**.

- After having to experience life's struggles, God is always there to comfort us. No longer pleading for the life of his child, David understood that life was to go on.

2Sa 12:21 Then said his servants unto him, What thing *is* this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, *while it was* alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. **22** And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell *whether* GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? **23** But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.

- When David washed, and anointed, and changed his apparel it was a sign that he was no longer in mourning or denying himself of the necessities of life. Under the Old Covenant, oil was also a symbol of gladness.

Psa 45:7 Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the **oil of gladness** above Thy fellows. (*Heb 1:9 quotes this as referring to Christ and His position above the spiritual beings of Heaven.*)

Heb 1:4 Being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent (*Gk.1313- surpassing*) name (*Gk.3686- authority*) than they.

- Not that **Christ** was once equal to the angels. This refers to **His** being “made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (*Heb 2:9*). An angel couldn’t do that.
- Notice what **Jesus** said concerning fasting and anointing.

Mat 6:16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. **17** But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; **18** That thou **appear not** unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

- Concerning the overflowing cup that **David** spoke of. Whether we wish to recognize it or not, we live in a country where there is an overabundance of necessities. The poorest person in the United States has so much more than the average citizen in a third world country. But even if we lived in such squalor, our cup still runneth over. We are spiritually well-off in **Christ**!

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Psa 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

- All the days of my life refer to **David’s** natural existence while on earth. Thus to dwell in the house of the Lord forever meant that **David** would do so as long as he lived in his earthly vessel.

Psa 27:4 One *thing* have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD **all the days of my life**, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in His temple.

- The house of the Lord refers to the family of **God**. Only there would he (*we*) receive the continual goodness and mercy (*Heb.2617- kindness*) that comes from above.

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of Whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come He might shew the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Are you dwelling in the house of the Lord forever?

#1.Have you heard?

#2. Do you believe?

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on Him **in Whom they have not believed?** and how shall they believe in Him **of Whom they have not heard?** and how shall they hear without a preacher?

#3. Have you repented?

Luk 15:7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.

#4. Have you confessed Jesus as the Christ?

Mat 10:32 Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father Who is in Heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father Who is in Heaven.

#5. Have your sins been washed away?

Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

#6. If you've done all these things, have you remained faithful?

Joh 15:10 If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love.

#7. Are you growing?

Eph 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, Who is the Head, *even* Christ:

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